

# CABINET COUNCIL ON CRIMINAL AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

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## STATE ECSTASY ACTION PLAN

*September 28, 2000*

The State of Maryland has a comprehensive strategy to control and prevent youth violence, drug use and gangs. The strategy (1) demands individual responsibility, (2) strengthens families, (3) enhances school safety, and (4) promotes supportive communities. Acting on each of these fronts maximizes the State's impact on public health and safety.

The Maryland Drug Early Warning System (DEWS) is a real-time statewide drug monitoring system. DEWS detects drugs as they emerge and identifies research-based policy actions. Ecstasy has now been identified as the leading emerging drug in Maryland. DEWS statistics indicate that:

- The number of counties reporting ecstasy as an emerging drug through the Maryland Drug Scan increased from 10 in 1999 to 18 in 2000
- The number of ecstasy cases processed by the Maryland Department of State Police increased four-fold from 1998 to 1999. As of September 6, 2000, there were 76 cases.
- Ecstasy-related emergency room episodes in the Baltimore Metropolitan area increased from 6 in 1998 to 35 in 1999

The following plan was approved at a meeting of the DEWS Action Team earlier this morning. The actions listed build on an existing foundation of activities already undertaken by a variety of state and local agencies.

**The goal of the DEWS Action Team is to reduce the use and availability of ecstasy. The Action Plan is built around four objectives:**

1. Inform and educate the public
2. Intensify and focus law enforcement efforts
3. Ensure proper diagnosis and treatment of ecstasy users
4. Assess and monitor ecstasy use in Maryland

## **ENFORCEMENT**

1. Intensify statewide enforcement of ecstasy trafficking, distribution, and possession laws by utilizing all investigative resources available, i.e., Maryland Department of State Police (MDSP), State Fire Marshal, state and local health departments, and licensing and permit boards.
2. Encourage local police departments to develop and implement tracking methods similar to those currently used by the MDSP
3. Encourage and support training for all law enforcement (sheriffs, local police departments, etc.) and criminal justice professionals including entrance level, in-service and regional seminars
4. Establish core group of MDSP drug investigators to assess, investigate, and prosecute club drug violations
5. Maintain and support the local task forces charged with investigating rave parties and club drug violations
6. Review current penalties for ecstasy-related offenses

## **PREVENTION/EDUCATION**

1. Feature Ecstasy in DEWS News Issue 2 (September 2000)
2. Release a DEWS Alert (October 2000)
3. Conduct Town Meetings to share information and educate the public
4. Produce a television PSA and distribute to local media markets (October 2000)
5. Develop Internet advertising strategy to target youth
6. Produce an educational video for the schools to use in grades 6 through 12 (in production)
7. Develop a special Ecstasy web page ([www.ecstasyfacts.org](http://www.ecstasyfacts.org) with a link to [www.mdsp-dec.org](http://www.mdsp-dec.org)) to educate the public about use in Maryland, enforcement actions and progress on the Ecstasy Action Plan October 2000)
8. Develop information packets for use at back to school nights (Montgomery County September 2000)
9. Develop and distribute school-based prevention education materials
10. Disseminate ecstasy information packets through parent groups, peer leadership organizations, faith-based organizations, and other public service organizations
11. Develop curriculum with MSDE to educate school-based personnel such as teachers, nurses, coaches, and student assistance staff
12. Add more ecstasy information to the JustFacts web page, a CESAR developed and managed web page for high school students on drugs and sexually transmitted diseases
13. Engage the private sector in drug prevention efforts

## **TREATMENT**

1. Educate hospital and emergency personnel to ensure that ecstasy episodes are properly diagnosed and treated
2. Distribute information establishing a standard testing protocol for ecstasy (type of test, cut off level, etc.)
3. Release an alert for hospitals through Maryland Poison Control (May 2000)
4. Post an alert on the ADAA web page (September 2000)
5. Conduct a special training for county treatment and prevention coordinators (ADAA's Office of Education and Training for Addiction Services (OETAS) will be sponsoring "Ecstasy: A Club Stimulant" Monday, November 27, 2000)
6. Develop and distribute an ecstasy fact sheet for drug treatment clinicians

## **DRUG USE MONITORING**

1. Continue OPUS Intake and Drug Scan studies with an emphasis on ecstasy
2. Initiate special studies such as the DEWS Ecstasy Rave Study
3. Collect MDSP monthly updates on crime lab ecstasy seizure analyses
4. Develop new questions for treatment intake personnel to use to collect trend information on secondary drugs such as ecstasy
5. Expand DEWS hospital reporting system pilot study implemented with Sinai Hospital in Baltimore
6. Post announcements/alerts on the new MAPPA list serve
7. Formalize sharing of data with Maryland Poison Control Center

**For additional information, please call Erin Artigiani at 301-403-8329.**